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About the monthly Water Level bulletin

April Precipitation Over the Great Lakes

As a percentage of the long-term April average:

Great Lakes Basin	103%
Lake Erie (including Lake St. Clair)	134%
Lake Superior	83%
Lakes Michigan-Huron	113%
Lake Ontario	55%

Note: These figures are preliminary.

LEVEL news

Volume 7, Number 5 **May 7, 1999**

Water Levels on All Lakes Rise During April

Upper Lakes Begin Their Annual Seasonal Rise

Monthly mean water levels on Lakes Superior and Huron rose slightly during the month of April suggesting that the upper lakes have joined Lakes Erie and Ontario in their annual seasonal rise.

During April, the average level of Lake Superior rose 5 cm reversing the downward trend in levels it has experienced since last July. At the beginning of May, the lake remains about 20 cm below its long-term average, and about 6 cm below chart datum. Even with increasing levels expected over the next few months, levels on Lake Superior will likely remain below average.

Despite near average precipitation, the average level of Lake Huron rose just 1 cm from March to April--only a fraction of its usual 9 cm rise. A 5 cm increase in levels from the beginning of April to the beginning of May suggests that it too may be starting its seasonal rise. Lake Huron's level was about 63 cm below that of last April, and was the lowest April level since 1967. The lake level is still, however, about 64 cm above the record low for the month recorded in 1964.

Higher than average precipitation over the Lakes St. Clair and Erie basins boosted their levels about 14 cm and 13 cm, respectively, during the month of April. At the beginning of May both lakes were within 4 cm of their averages. Although lower Lake Huron outflows will affect their levels, both lakes are likely to remain near average into the summer months.

Lake Ontario levels continue to climb, increasing by 13 cm over the month. Despite this increase, at the beginning of May the lake's level was 29 cm below average. Below average levels are expected to continue through the summer unless very high supplies are experienced.

Montréal Harbour levels rose during the month but remain about 70 cm below average and about 60 cm above the record low for April.

All Lakes Still Well Above 1918-98 Period-of-Record Lows

Over the past one or two years, the water levels on the Great Lakes have

April Outflows From the Great Lakes

As a percentage of the long-term April average:

Lake Superior	76%
Lake Erie	101%
Lake Huron	94%
Lake Ontario	95%

Note: These figures are preliminary.

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Summary information for "LEVEL*news*"

fallen dramatically from levels approaching the record highs of 1985 or 1986 to levels as much as 20 to 30 cm below average on Lake Superior and Ontario, and to near average on Lakes St. Clair and Erie. While lower water levels this year is good news for shore property owners who have suffered flood and storm damage, it is not so favourable for commercial and recreational boaters who have grown accustomed to the higher than average levels experienced over the recent past. Although water levels are significantly lower it is important to note that all lakes remain well above their record lows for the 1918-98 period of record used for comparison purposes. Lake Superior remains about 40 cm above its record low, while the remaining lakes are 60-90 cm above theirs.

Public Meeting Scheduled

The International St. Lawrence River Board of Control will hold a public meeting to discuss the regulation of outflows and water levels of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. The meeting will be held on June 2, 1999 from 7:00 p.m. until 9:30 p.m. at the Cornwall Civic Complex, 100 Water Street East, Cornwall, Ontario. The Board Secretaries will accept telephone pre-registration for people who wish to speak.

For details, or to address the meeting, please contact:

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